

Rural District Council of Wells.

Report of Medical Officer of Health for 1904.

STREET, SOMERSET,
JANUARY 23rd, 1905.

To the Rural District Council of Wells.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit my report for the year ended December 31st, 1904.

Area.	58,212 Acres.
Population.	Census 1901, 10,767. Estimated to the middle of 1904 at 10,563.
Geology.	Dolomitic conglomerate at Chewton and Westbury; mountain limestone at Priddy; red marl at Dinder, North Wootton and Rodney Stoke; red marl and river gravel at Wookey; lower lias at West Pennard, Baltonsborough, Butleigh and Walton; alluvium and peat at Glastonbury Moor.
Occupation.	Chiefly agricultural, cheese and cider making. Paper factories. Some of the inhabitants at Butleigh and Walton work at the shoe, leather and skin factories at Street and Glastonbury, and at the quarries at Street.
Birth Rate.	234 births registered (131 males, 103 females), giving a birth rate of 22.1 per 1000 per annum.
Death Rate.	244 deaths registered (129 males, 115 females), giving a death rate of 23.09 per 1000 per annum. 88 deaths occurred in the Somerset and Bath County Asylum at Wells. Deducting these, the <i>corrected death rate</i> for the Rural District is 14.7 per 1000 per annum.
Zymotic Death Rate.	Four deaths registered from zymotic disease, giving a zymotic rate of 0.37 per 1000 living.
Infant Mortality.	Infant Mortality per 1000 births is 81.1; 19 deaths under one year being registered.

FOR THE YEAR 1903.						
Birth Rate.	Birth Rate	...	...	per 1000 living	...	20.4
Death Rate.	Death Rate	...	...	„ „	...	20.8
Corrected Death Rate.	Corrected Death Rate	...	...	„ „	...	12.04
Zymotic Rate.	Zymotic Death Rate	...	...	„ „	...	0.37
Infant Mortality.	Infant Mortality	...	...	per 1000 births	...	101.3

Water Supply. The supply at Chewton Mendip, Draycott, Dinder, Priddy and Westbury is good. At Butleigh the present excellent supply has been augmented by the resident landowner extending the main and erecting a stand pipe in the main street.

The village of WEST PENNARD is supplied by the Glastonbury Corporation. This supply has been extended during the year to the WOODLANDS district, and a further extension for East Street, Sticklinch and Stean-bow districts, is under consideration.

GODNEY has now an excellent supply from the Street main, coming direct from the Mendips. At POLSHAM, by private arrangement, some of the houses are also supplied from the same source.

BALTONSBOROUGH.—A Local Government Board Inquiry has been held during the year relative to the proposed arrangement for the supply of this district from the Ditchheat source, under the Rural District Council of Shepton Mallet. The present supply is totally unsuitable, being either from rain water tanks, ponds, or the river.

MEARE.—At the request of the Council I have made, during the year, a special report on the supply of this district. As a whole, the major part of the Meare Parish has a fair supply for a country district, but many of the wells being shallow, are especially liable to pollution, and in a continuance of dry weather, the supply is materially reduced. The Meareway and Ashcott Corner districts are those to which I have drawn special attention in previous reports, the position of the wells in the former district being especially liable to pollution, and the latter district drawing its supply either from the ditches or the rhine.

At NORTH WOOTTON the water is good, but needs protection at its source.

At SHARPHAM the main supply is obtained either from the ditches or the canal. In some instances rain water tanks are used. An arrangement has been made with the Street Urban District Council, subject to the sanction of the Local Government Board, for the erection of a stand-pipe from their main for the supply of drinking water for part of this district.

At WALTON the supply is from wells, which in a continuance of dry weather are adversely affected.

I have examined a number of samples of well water during the year, and reported thereon to the Council.

**Sewerage and
Drainage.**

No general system of drainage exists in the district. Privies with cesspools are principally in use, and being emptied infrequently and at times draining into adjoining watercourses, are a source of danger. The system of earth closets, where practicable, is encouraged.

At BUTLEIGH the common sewer has been extended some 160 yards.

Complaint was made during the year of the pollution of the stream at DULCOTE. The cause of the complaint no longer exists.

**Prevalence of
Disease.**

Eighteen cases of Scarlet Fever have been notified during the year: Eight at Rodney Stoke, three at Meare, five at Walton, one at Chewton Mendip, and one at Butleigh. The school at Walton was—on my advice—closed for a period.

Two cases of Diphtheria were notified during the year: One at Draycott (fatal), and one at Dinder.

Four cases of Erysipelas have been notified: Three at Chewton Mendip, one at Butleigh.

Two cases of Enteric Fever were notified from the Out St. Cuthbert District. One case of Puerperal Fever from Butleigh.

Whooping Cough being prevalent at Wookey during September, I advised the closure of the school there for a period.

I have visited the various districts upon the notification of infectious diseases, along with the Inspector, visiting the premises and reporting upon any insanitary condition that might exist, the Inspectors have kept all cases

under their supervision. As far as possible isolation has been effected, and disinfection of the premises afterwards carried out,

It is again satisfactory to note the diminution of infectious cases notified. Twenty-seven being notified for 1904, against 30 in 1903, and 77 in 1902.

Factory and Work-shops Act, 1901.

Inspections have been made under this Act by the Inspectors of Nuisances and myself. Registers of Workshops are kept, and the various factories and workshops visited and inspected. The sanitation, ventilation, means of escape in case of fire, and the provision of suitable sanitary conveniences attended to.

Table of Deaths.

Ages Table of Deaths (excluding deaths in Asylum).

Under 1 year there were 19 deaths					
1 and under 5 years there were 6 deaths					
5	„	15	„	„	7
15	„	25	„	„	4
25	„	65	„	„	50
65	and	upwards		„	70

Rural District. Asylum.

Causes of Death.

Whooping Cough	1	
Diphtheria	1	
Croup	1	
Influenza	5	
Diarrhoea	1	
Enteritis	1	1
Puerperal Fever	1	
Phthisis	9	14
Other Tubercular Diseases	4	1
Cancer	13	2
Bronchitis	8	
Pneumonia	17	10
Pleurisy	1	
Cirrhosis of Liver	1	
Premature Birth	3	
Diseases and Accidents of Parturition	4	
Heart Diseases	27	8
Accidents	7	
Suicides	2	
All other causes	49	52

Isolation Hospital.

None. The provision of one recommended. A cottage at Worminster is retained by the Council for the isolation of any case of small-pox that might arise. Its inaccessibility, however, precludes its use for general isolation purposes.

Disinfection Means.

Fumigation by sulphur candles. Disinfectants are gratuitously provided by the Rural District Council.

Housing of the Working Classes.

Visits paid with the Inspectors. Several cases of overcrowding reported upon and dealt with.

General Inspections.

Slaughter-houses, Bake-houses and Public Schools visited and inspected.

Bye-Laws.

None. A suitable code required.

I append Tables of Statistics, together with the Reports of the Sanitary Inspectors, to whose co-operation I am again greatly indebted.

I have the honour to be,

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

GEORGE W. EGLINTON.

REPORTS AND SUMMARY OF INSPECTORS OF NUISANCES.

DISTRICT No. 1.

I beg to present to you my report for the year ended December 31st, 1904.

During the year I have endeavoured to carry out the duties prescribed by the Local Government Board for an Inspector of Nuisances. I have attended all the Meetings of the Council to receive their instructions, and carried out the instructions of the Medical Officer of Health for the prevention of the spread of Infectious Disease, &c.

The following is a summary of the cases reported by me to the Council, and dealt with by order :—

	No of cases.
Dwelling houses with insufficient privy accommodation	10
Dwelling houses overcrowded	5
Dwelling houses unfit for human habitation, notices served and occupation discontinued	2
Infected dwellings : Occupiers served with notice as to isolation of patients, disinfection of dwellings, &c. (disinfectants supplied by the Council)...	13
Dwellings and clothing disinfected as directed by the Medical Officer of Health ...	13
Public school premises disinfected as directed by the Medical Officer of Health ...	3
New dwelling houses erected for which certificates of occupation have been granted by the Council	4
Dilapidated and dangerous buildings repaired	2
Dilapidated and dangerous privies repaired	15
Nuisances arising from foul and choked drains, foul accumulations, &c., dealt with ...	39
Animals so kept as to be a nuisance	4
New sewer laid	1
New drains laid and old ones repaired	7
Slaughter-houses, bake-houses, and public schools inspected (no bye-laws in force) ...	25
Pollution of stream dealt with	1
Samples of water submitted to the Medical Officer of Health	3
Wells opened, cleansed and repaired, by order	2
Formal notices served by the Inspector	52

In addition to the above I have also paid periodical visits to the whole of the Factories, Workshops and Workplaces in the district, and with very few exceptions have found them in a fairly clean state, and in a satisfactory sanitary condition.

I have also made a large number of inspections in my daily rounds and visits, and given verbal notices to abate nuisances.

PHILIP WILLIAMS,
Inspector No. 1 District.

DISTRICT No. 2.

During the year I have again endeavoured to carry out the instructions of the Local Government Board Order prescribing the duties of Inspectors of Nuisances ; reported to, and attended all the Meetings of the Council, and carried out their instructions, and also the directions of the Medical Officer of Health for the prevention and spread of Infectious Disease.

The following is a summary of cases reported by me to the Council, and dealt with by order :—

	No of cases.
Nuisances arising from foul and choked drains and privies, foul accumulations, &c. ...	35
Infected Dwellings : Occupiers served with notices as to isolation of patients and disinfection of dwellings, clothing, &c. (disinfectants supplied gratuitously by the Council)	9
Dwellings, schoolrooms, clothing, &c., disinfected under the direction of the Medical Officer of Health	10
Dilapidated dwellings, repaired by order	3
Animals so kept as to be a nuisance	4
Bake-houses, slaughter-houses and offices of public schools inspected (no bye-laws in force)	21
Formal Notices served by the Inspector	49
Case of overcrowding	1
Defective and inefficient privies remedied	9
Factories, workshops, &c., have received attention (one additional factory has been registered during the year)	
A special return <i>re</i> fire brigades, fires, &c., was prepared and submitted to the Council	1
At Butleigh the common sewer in Butleigh Street has been extended about 160 yards	1
I have prepared and submitted to the Council a special report of the water supply of the Parish of Sharpham	1

In addition to the above, a large number of inspections and re-inspections have been made, and verbal notices given by the Inspector in his rounds and periodical inspections ; as well as rendering assistance to the engineer and occupiers in connection with the water supply for Woodlands. Also in making arrangements for the proposed supply for the Parish of Baltonsborough.

I have also assisted the various occupiers in connection with the supply of water for the Parish of Godney.

EDWIN H. PADFIELD,
Inspector No. 2 District.